Amendments to the Claims

1-76. (canceled)

77. (previously presented) A network system comprising:

a service;

an agent operable to use the service on behalf of a principal and to consume a service resource while using the service;

an agent server operable to mediate the use of the service by the agent; and

a service wrapper associated with the service, the service wrapper operable to monitor the consumption of the service resource by the agent.

78. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service wrapper is operable to terminate the agent in response to the monitoring.

79. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the agent server is operable to charge the principal for the consumption of the service resource.

80. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a service permission associated with the service resource and the agent, the service permission specifying a predetermined amount of the service resource which the agent is allowed to consume.

81. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a service permission associated with the service resource and the principal, the service permission specifying a predetermined amount of the service resource which is allowed to be consumed on behalf of the principal.

82. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service resource comprises elapsed time for a telephone call.

83. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service resource comprises cost for a telephone call.

84. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service wrapper is operable to translate between a first instruction set and a second instruction set.

85. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a user interface coupled to the agent server, the user interface operable to allow a user to create, modify, or delete an agent template from which the agent is created.

86. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a user interface coupled to the agent server, the user interface operable to allow a user to create, modify, or delete the agent.

87. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 86 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

88. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 87 wherein the graphical user interface comprises:
        a web server resident in the network system; and
        a web browser resident in a user device.

89. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 86 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

90. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 89 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

91. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 89 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

92. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 89 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

93. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service comprises a user interface service operable to provide a user interface by which the agent can interact with a user.

94. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 93 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

95. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 94 wherein the graphical user interface comprises:

a web server resident in the network system; and

a web browser resident in a user device.

96. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 93 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

97. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 96 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

98. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 96 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

99. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 96 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

100. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service supports at least one of voice mail, electronic mail, electronic appointment book, electronic address book, and on-line data retrieval.

101. (previously presented) A network system comprising:

a user interface operable to allow a user to interact with the network system; and

an agent server coupled to the user interface, the agent server operable to manage the operation of a programmable functionality component of the network system, the agent server in conjunction with the user interface operable to create, modify, or delete an agent in response to interaction by the user, the agent operable to consume a service resource as the agent uses a service on behalf of the user.

102. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

103. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 102 wherein the graphical user interface comprises a web browser application.

104. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

105. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 104 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

106. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 104 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

107. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 104 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

108. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the user interface comprises an agent area for creating, modifying, or deleting the agent.

109. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the service supports at least one of voice mail, electronic mail, electronic appointment book, electronic address book, and on-line data retrieval.

110. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 101 further comprising a service wrapper associated with the service, the service wrapper operable to cooperate with the agent server to mediate interaction between the service and the agent.

111. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 110 wherein the service wrapper is operable to convert between a first computer language used by the agent and a second computer language used by the service.

112. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 110 wherein the service wrapper is operable to monitor the amount of service resource consumed by the agent when the agent utilizes the service.

113. (previously presented) A method comprising:

    admitting a user to a network system wherein at least one agent is operable to consume a service resource while utilizing a service to perform a task for the user; and

    allowing the user to create, modify, or delete the agent within the network system.

114. (previously presented) The method of Claim 113 further comprising accepting an agent command from the user.

115. (previously presented) The method of Claim 114 wherein the agent command is one of a create agent command, an edit agent command, and a delete agent command.

116. (previously presented) The method of Claim 113 further comprising suspending execution of the agent.

117. (previously presented) The method of Claim 113 further comprising accepting a template command from the user.

118. (previously presented) The method of Claim 117 further comprising allowing the user to create, modify, or delete an agent template within the network system.

119. (previously presented) The method of Claim 113 further comprising admitting the user to an agent area of a user interface.

120. (previously presented) A network system comprising:

    an agent server operable to manage the operation of a programmable functionality component of the network system;

    a service;

    an agent operable to consume a service resource while utilizing the service; and

a service wrapper associated with the service, the service wrapper operable to cooperate with the agent server to mediate interaction between the service and the agent.

121. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 120 wherein the service wrapper comprises a monitor, the monitor operable to monitor the amount of the service resource consumed by the agent when the agent utilizes the service.

122. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 120 wherein the service wrapper comprises a converter, the converter operable to convert between a first computer language used by the agent and a second computer language used by the service.

123. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 122 wherein the converter comprises an agent server to service converter for converting from the first computer language to the second computer language.

124 (previously presented) The network system of Claim 122 wherein the converter comprises a service to agent server converter for converting from the second computer language to the first computer language.

125. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 120 wherein the service supports at least one of voice mail, electronic mail, electronic appointment book, electronic address book, and on-line data retrieval.

126. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 120 further comprising a user interface operable to allow a user to interact with the network system in order to create the agent.

127. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 126 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

128. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 127 wherein the graphical user interface comprises a web browser application.

129. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 127 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

130. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 129 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

131. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 129 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

132. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 129 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

133. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 120 further comprising an agent object associated with the agent and resident in the agent server, the agent object comprising data and instructions executable within the agent server.

134. (previously presented) The network system of Claim 120 further comprising an agent object associated with the agent and resident in the agent server, the agent object comprising a permission for the agent.

135-141. (canceled)